

LORD OF THE GREEN DRAGONS

"TEN FEET, TWENTY FEET, THIRTY FEET SOUTH. PASSAGE TURNS EAST AND WEST. WHICH WAY DO YOU GO?" "WE GO SOUTH." STUPEFIED LOOK AND MOMENTARY PAUSE. "OKAY. BUMP, BUMP, BUMP." -E. GARY GYGAX TO ADVENTURERS IN GREYHAWK CASTLE, CIRCA 1972 YOU HAVE NOW ENTERED THE REALM OF THE LORD OF THE GREEN DRAGONS -- A "CLASSIC GAMING" BLOG.

MONDAY, DECEMBER 14, 2009

Castle El Raja Key, small Partial of the Introductory, Historical Essay

Hereafter follows a small snippet from the accompanying essay which (in full) delineates the first Blackmoor adventure in LG, the initial reaction to this by Gary and myself in a meeting between us the day afterward, the formulation of the OD&D first draft, the crafting of Castle Greyhawk and El Raja Key, the composite Lake Geneva Campaign as it grew, and includes some slices of these adventures later written about and detailed in "Up on a SoapBox" in the *Dragon Magazine* and at various forums, and in unpublished form (both in EGG's mss and my own). The whole in depth essay is a wealth of history regarding the advent of FRPG in Lake Geneva in 1972.

"...As I was ostensibly part of the Gygax extended family since 1968, I was at their house and with Gary almost every day. After the initial

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Blackmoor adventure events proceeded at a furious pace. Phone calls to Dave. Letters exchanged between the two. During this time EGG noted that he had begun crafting a “dungeon” setting similar to Dave’s Blackmoor. About two weeks after this adventure, Gary handed me a slim manuscript which had been mailed to him by David. I sat down and read for the first time the rules that David had used during it. They consisted of “16 pages of [typed] notes” (as EGG emphasized while I was perusing them). He and I both noted that they were based off of EGG’s Fantasy Supplement to the rules *Chainmail* (Gygax & Perren, Guidon Games 1971) but with copious additions of formulas which I faintly (at least then) equated to those from the miniatures game *Strategos N* (David Wesley, 1967) that I had watched being played at GENCON 2. Gary informed me that these notes were in need of streamlining and that he would be doing this over the coming weeks as well as continuing to craft a dungeon to play-test the refined rules.

The First Draft of OD&D -- Greyhawk Castle is Born -- El Raja Key Quickly Follows.

"Within 4-6 weeks of our first adventure into Blackmoor Gary had a rough first draft of the new rules and several levels of the new dungeon, Greyhawk, to play-test these. His daughters and Ernie were the first adventurers; the second one consisted of myself (Robilar), my brother Terry (Terik), Ernie Gygax (Tenser) and Elise Gygax (Ahlissa). Within 4 weeks of this second adventure and the ones that followed on a daily and nightly basis, I crafted the first levels of El Raja Key, at first with the intent of only judging Gary therein, as he had been pulling double duty with writing the D&D rules as well as designing the levels beneath Greyhawk Castle. After starting his PCs Yrag and Mordenkainen within it, Gary took his first step at making me the co-DM of the Greyhawk “Campaign” as then understood. As the play-tests had been fast and furious, many of the earliest PCs had grown very quickly in level and were moving to the outdoor. I was allowed to DM these outdoor adventures just prior to completing my journey as Robilar to “China” (which earned me the co-DM mantle permanently and on all levels). ..."

POSTED BY ROB KUNTZ AT 10:10 AM 

LABELS: CASTLE EL RAJA KEY PRODUCT NEWS, ORIGINAL CAMPAIGN HISTORY

4 COMMENTS:



The Acrobatic Flea said...

Alan Silcock
grodog
Kiltedyaksman
Lord Ghul
Heruka
Rhuvein
Wargamer204
Pat Payne
Hierax
Benoist
bombadil
Endymion
ATOM
Edward
Joe Mac
rafael beltrame
kaskoid
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Can't wait for this to come out in print! This is exactly the sort of Original Campaign history and notes that I love to read for their inspirational content.

DECEMBER 14, 2009 AT 10:39 AM



E.G.Palmer said...

This is great, Rob! Ever since my little brother found out I talked to you, he's been pestering me to find out more about Robilar's early history, and El Raja Key.

DECEMBER 14, 2009 AT 5:03 PM



Rhuvein said...

Great reading . . looking forward to more!! :-)

DECEMBER 18, 2009 AT 8:02 PM



rafael beltrame said...

great story, rob! i have to agree with The Acrobatic Flea, this is very inspiring!

hope to have news on thr robilar book

DECEMBER 21, 2009 AT 5:50 AM

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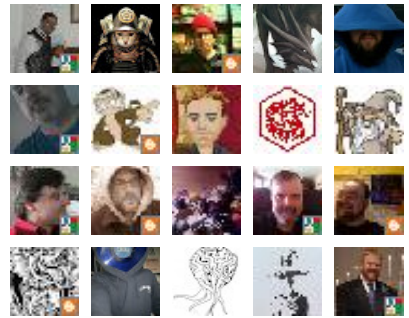
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